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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Letter dated 30 January 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour, in my capacity as Chair of the Arab Group in New York, to transmit to you the resolutions and declaration adopted at the Economic Summit of the League of Arab States, held on 22 January 2013 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 121 (n).

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

13-22501 (E) 220213 010313

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Annex to the letter dated 30 January 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

Third session

Riyadh, 10 Rabi' I A.H. 1434 (22 January A.D. 2013)

Resolutions

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Resolutions adopted at the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

Riyadh, 22 January 2013

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- The Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030)
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The Council of the League at the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, having considered:

- The report of the Secretary General on follow-up of implementation of resolutions adopted at the first and second sessions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Kuwait on 19 and 20 January 2009 and Sharm al-Sheikh on 19 January 2011 respectively;
- Resolution No. 560, adopted on 29 March 2012 by the twenty-third regular session of the Council of the League of Arab States at the Summit level, concerning follow-up of implementation of resolutions adopted at the first and second sessions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit and preparations for the third session of the Development Summit;
- Resolution No. 1923, adopted on 13 September 2012 by the ninetieth regular session of the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States, concerning the agenda for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit (Riyadh, 22 January 2013);
- Resolution No. 1942, adopted on 6 December 2012 at the special session of the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States, requesting the General Secretariat to update the report on follow-up of implementation of resolutions adopted at the first and second sessions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held, respectively, in Kuwait in 2009 and Sharm al-Sheikh in 2011, up to the date of the third session of the Development Summit (Riyadh, 21 and 22 January 2013);
- The draft resolutions put forward by the joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Economic and Social Council ministers that was held in preparation for the third session of the Development Summit;

Having taken into consideration the progress made in implementing the resolutions adopted at the first and second sessions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held, respectively, in Kuwait in 2009 and Sharm al-Sheikh in 2011, and the efforts that continue to be exerted by member States, the pertinent ministerial councils, the relevant Arab organizations and regional and international organizations;

Having also taken into consideration both the report of the Secretary General in which implementation was evaluated and the proposals for removing obstacles to full implementation of the resolutions adopted at those two Summits;

Reaffirming the need to continue efforts to remove obstacles to full implementation of the resolutions adopted at the two aforementioned Summits and address funding problems that prevent the implementation of certain projects by utilizing the financial resources available from national, Arab, regional and international funding institutions and finding innovative methods of financing;

Commending the executive measures that have been taken with a view to activating the account for the financing of small and medium projects in the Arab States that was opened with the Arab Fund after the first session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit was held in Kuwait in 2009, and the Arab Aid for Trade Initiative

– And in the light of discussions,

Decides:

I. Follow-up of implementation of resolutions adopted at the first session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Kuwait on 19 and 20 January 2009:

1. The initiative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, relating to the provision of the necessary resources to support and finance private sector projects in small and medium enterprises in the Arab world

(a) To take note of the contributions that have been pledged by Arab States, amounting to $1,202,000 million of the $2 billion capital in the account; call upon those member States that have not yet paid their contributions in full to honour their commitment by paying the amount that they pledged into the special Fund account; and invite States that have not yet announced a contribution to do so.

(b) To take note of the loans, worth $175 million, made to several States by the Fund, and of the funding, estimated at $1.9 billion, that will be requested by medium enterprises that deal with the Arab Fund in six Arab States; and call upon the Fund to continue to support funding activities for such enterprises, in accordance with the programmes and plans that it devised for 2012-2015.

(c) To welcome the inauguration of the activity of the Fund account to support and finance private sector projects in small and medium enterprises in the Arab world and call upon the Arab Economic and Social Development Fund to continue to submit to the Economic and Social Council a regular detailed report on progress made.

2. The health status of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip

(a) To take note of the support and assistance in the health field that has been provided by member States to the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip.

(b) To support the efforts of the Council of Arab Ministers of Health to improve the health status of the Palestinian people and rehabilitate health institutions in the Gaza Strip.

(c) To call upon member States, in coordination with the Council of Arab Ministers of Health, to continue to provide support and assistance to the health sector in the Gaza Strip.

3. The challenges posed to Arab economies by the global financial crisis

(a) To take note of the measures that have been taken by Arab States to deal with the challenges posed by the global financial crisis.

(b) To call upon the Arab States to strengthen the ability of national economies to absorb various economic shocks.

(c) To develop the systems and mechanisms employed by social security networks to protect the poorest sectors of society.

(d) To continue to strive to create a climate that is supportive of and provides incentives for the business sector as part of efforts to stimulate the private sector and encourage economic diversification.

4. Arab electricity linkage projects

(a) To take note of the progress that has been made in respect of projects and studies on the following main Arab electricity linkages:

- Completion in April 2011 of the link between the United Arab Emirates and the Gulf Cooperation Council States electricity grid.
- The agreement between Saudi Arabia and Egypt to implement the project to link their electrical grids and conduct operational testing in 2015.
- The positive steps that have been taken by the Arab Economic and Social Development Fund and the World Bank towards the implementation of a study on linking all the Arab electricity grids and evaluating the use of natural gas to produce electricity, and with regard to the preparation of a draft memorandum of understanding on the establishment of a common Arab electricity market.
- A group of electricity experts visited Mauritania in order to familiarize themselves with the electricity system and future lines and prepare a report on the matter in preparation for a study of various ways of linking Mauritania to neighbouring countries.

(b) To invite Arab, regional and international funding institutions to contribute to the financing of projects to prepare the internal electricity grids of the Arab least-developed States for linkage with neighbouring countries.

(c) To call upon the Arab private sector to invest in energy markets that have been established as part of the Arab electricity linkage, pursuant to the outcome of the relevant study.

5. Plans for Arab rail links

(a) To take note of the positive steps that have been taken by certain Arab States to implement the rail link.

(b) To take note of the steps that have been taken by the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport and the Arab Economic and Social Development Fund to prepare an in-depth study on Arab rail links.

(c) To invite national, Arab, regional and international funding institutions to contribute to the financing of implementation of plans for Arab rail links.

(d) To invite the Arab private sector to invest in Arab rail links.

(e) To call upon the Arab States to ensure appropriate conditions and initiate contacts with the Arab private sector with a view to encouraging investment in implementation of Arab rail links.

6. The Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security

(a) To take note of the efforts of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development to implement the first stage of the framework plan for implementation of the Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security (2011-2016).

(b) To commend the steps taken by several Arab States to implement the programme.

(c) To welcome the readiness of certain Arab, regional and international funding institutions, including the Arab Economic and Social Development Fund, the Abu Dhabi Development Fund, the Islamic Development Bank and the OPEC Fund for International Development, to contribute to the financing of implementation of project and programmes that have been prepared by Arab States and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development as part of the Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security; and invite all Arab, regional and international funding institutions to contribute to the financing of Programme projects.

(d) To request Arab States to inform the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development of the particulars of projects that they are preparing as part of the Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security and provide regular reports on the status of implementation of Programme components.

(e) To commission the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development to continue follow-up and promotion of implementation of Programme components, in coordination with the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development, the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands, the Arab private sector, the Arab beneficiary States and Arab, regional and international financial institutions, with a view to supporting the first stage of the Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security (2011-2016).

(f) To invite Arab States with relative advantages in the area of agriculture to prepare an appropriate climate to attract investment in that field and grant preferential advantages to Arab investors.

(g) To welcome the imitative of H.E. the President of the Sudan for Arab agricultural investment in the Sudan, the aim of which is to help bridge the food gap and ensure Arab food security; and to request the Economic and Social Council to hold one of its 2013 meetings in Khartoum, in order to consider practical measures for ensuring implementation of the initiative.

7. The Arab Customs Union

(a) To direct the Economic and Social Council to work towards completion of all requirements for the creation of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) by the end of 2013, including the following:

- Devising detailed Arab rules of origin and dealing with the products of free zones in a decisive manner, because of the importance of both

matters in attracting investment and increasing the number of member State industries.

- Devising the final form of the obligations schedules for the liberalization of trade in services between Arab States.
- Providing the Arab least-developed GAFTA member countries with the requisite financial and technical support.
- Formulating the programme necessary to strengthen trade support service structure, including transport and communications.
- Devising final standards for Arab commodities and developing the procedures to be followed in Arab countries with regard to the adoption of certificates of conformity for intra-Arab imports and exports.
- Harmonizing Arab trade systems in respect of competition and antitrust legislation and policies.

(b) To take note of the positive steps that have been taken by the League of Arab States with a view to finalizing a declaration on the Arab Customs Union in 2015, in accordance with the timetable for the establishment of the Union.

(c) To invite the Arab States to enter into negotiations over customs tariff categories and conclude such negotiations within the period by which it has been determined that the Arab Customs Union should be announced in 2015.

(d) To welcome the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation aid for trade initiative and urge the Arab GAFTA member countries to establish focal points to follow up implementation of its programmes, which will strengthen trade-supporting services, and develop legislation in general, in the Arab least-developed GAFTA member countries in particular.

(e) To request the League of Arab States General Secretariat to follow up implementation of aid for trade programmes with the relevant regional and international organizations and submit a regular report to the Economic and Social Council.

8. Arab water security

(a) To welcome the response of several international bodies and Arab, regional and international financial institutions with regard to implementation of projects that have grown out of the integrated management of water resources project that is supervised by the Council of Arab Ministers of Water and the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands, and invite them to coordinate with the Centre in order to agree practical procedures for initiating implementation of those projects.

(b) To invite the Council of Arab Ministers of Water to finalize preparation of the executive plan for the Strategy for Water Security in the Arab Region which, with a view to addressing future challenges and needs for sustainable development, was adopted by the Council of the League at the Summit level in resolution 562 of the twenty-third ordinary session.

9. The integrated programme to support employment and reduce unemployment in Arab countries

(a) To take note of the efforts exerted by the Arab Labour Organization with a view to implementing the integrated programme to support employment and reduce unemployment in Arab countries and invite it to continue efforts, in coordination with all the relevant parties, to provide the funding necessary for full implementation of programme requirements.

(b) To call upon member States, funding institutions and the Arab Labour Organization to complete the deposit of their contributions, in accordance with the percentages decided, for implementation of programme requirements.

10. The Arab Programme for Poverty Reduction in Arab States

(a) To take note of the efforts exerted by member States and the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs to implement the Arab Programme for Poverty Reduction in Arab States and the financial support provided for that purpose by the Arab Fund for Social Work, and to urge the Council to continue its worthy endeavours in that regard.

(b) To call upon member States to continue their efforts to implement the Arab Programme for Poverty Reduction in Arab States, with priority being given to social policies for poverty reduction.

(c) To support Arab efforts to help the Arab least-developed countries to implement the requirements of the Arab Programme for Poverty Reduction.

(d) To call upon member States to make use of the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, relating to the provision of the necessary resources to support and finance private sector projects in small and medium enterprises in the Arab world, as an Arab mechanism for poverty reduction in the Arab States.

(e) To commission the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, in coordination with member States, to devise a model for monitoring implementation of the Programme that is consonant with the ability of member States to implement Programme requirements, including the preparation of regular reports on the follow-up of implementation for submission to the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs and the Economic and Social Council and thence to the Summit.

(f) To request the General Secretariat, in coordination with member States and the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, to continue efforts, in cooperation with Arab and international funding institutions, to find the mechanisms necessary for funding and implementation of the Programme.

11. The Arab Programme for Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

(a) To take note of the efforts exerted by the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs to assist member States and, in particular, the least-developed countries, in implementing the Arab Programme for Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and of the financial assistance provided by the Arab Fund for Social Work in that regard; and to call upon the Council to continue its worthy endeavours in that field.

(b) To call upon member States to continue efforts at the national level to implement the Arab Programme for Implementation of the Millennium

Development Goals and prepare regular reports on the extent of the progress that has been made in this regard.

(c) To request the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, in coordination with the United Nations specialized agencies that work in the Arab region, to arrange training sessions for officials in Arab States on the preparation of reports on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals that meet the relevant international specifications.

(d) To confirm that support will continue for Somali development and reconstruction efforts aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and for the formulation of the requisite legislation to that end.

12. Ameliorating education in the Arab world

(a) To take note of the efforts exerted by member States to improve education, and to call upon them to provide the Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science with annual reports at the proper time.

(b) To request the Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science, in coordination with the General Secretariat, to prepare an evaluation of the plan for the improvement of education in the Arab world after the first five years of the plan, for submission to the fourth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in 2015.

13. Improvement of levels of health care

(a) To take note of the efforts exerted by member States to improve levels of health care.

(b) To support Arab efforts to improve levels of health care in the least-developed Arab countries.

(c) To request member States to continue efforts to become self-sufficient with regard to family health medical staff and provide the necessary training in that specialization for doctors.

(d) To support the efforts exerted by the Council of Arab Ministers of Health to improve levels of health care and, in particular, to upgrade health care units and apply the family health system in rural areas and poor regions and slums, and improve the health services that are provided to mothers and children and ageing persons.

(e) To commission the Council of Arab Ministers of Health to hold a greater number of technical capacity-building training courses for health teams.

14. The role of the private sector in supporting joint Arab action

(a) To call upon the Arab States to devise appropriate mechanisms and policies that will encourage the private sector to invest in priority projects related to joint Arab action.

(b) To invite the private sector to direct investment towards production sectors, in accordance with the relative advantages that each Arab State enjoys, and increase its participation in the social and development fields, including the implementation of Arab development projects that are adopted by Arab Summits.

15. Activation of the role of Arab civil society organizations

(a) To call upon member States to continue efforts to achieve partnership between governments and civil society organizations, particularly with regard to the economic and social development process.

(b) To call upon civil society organizations and institutions to put forward more initiatives in the social, development and humanitarian assistance fields, in order to contribute to the realization of comprehensive development in the Arab region.

II. Follow-up of implementation of the resolutions adopted at the second session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Sharm al-Sheikh on 19 January 2011

16. Project concerning maritime links between Arab States

(a) To take note of the steps that have been taken by the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport with respect to the routes for maritime links between Arab States, including ratification of the Agreement on Multimodal Transport of Goods, which has entered into force, and preparation of a draft Arab agreement for cooperation in the field of maritime transport and the movement of goods between Arab States.

(b) To invite Arab, regional and international funding institutions to contribute to the development of the maritime transport industry in the Arab States.

17. Project to link Arab Internet networks

(a) To invite companies involved in the exchange of information to activate dialogue between those who are concerned with that field and review best practices in establishing exchange points.

(b) To develop general policies for the management of Arab communications and information technology through the Council of Arab Ministers of Communications and Information Technology, in order to increase appreciation of the importance of the multi-party environment of the communications and information technology sector and encourage governments to develop infrastructure and ensure an appropriate climate for the activation of the role of the relevant companies in implementing projects that will contribute to the development of the Arab communications and information technology sector and the participation of funding institutions in providing financial support for such projects.

(c) To activate Arab cooperation with other sectoral groups, with a view to transferring expertise and exchanging best experiences and practices in the field.

18. The World Bank Initiative in the Arab World

(a) To take note of the efforts that have been exerted with a view to implementing the World Bank Initiative in the Arab World.

(b) To continue to strengthen cooperation between the General Secretariat and the World Bank in the areas that are set forth in the memorandum of understanding that has been signed by those two parties.

19. Promoting efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals

(a) To take note of the following:

- The successes that have been achieved by Arab States in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.
- The efforts exerted by the relevant Arab councils of ministers, in coordination with member States, with a view to implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

(b) To activate existing Arab mechanisms for the provision of development statistics and link them with national mechanisms in preparation for the establishment of solid, reliable databases that conform to the recognized international standards in this field.

(c) To strengthen Arab efforts to achieve Goal 1, target 3, and tackle hunger in the least-developed Arab countries and, in particular, to intervene rapidly to deal with the impact on food security of emergency situations.

(d) To support the efforts of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, in coordination with the United Nations specialized agencies, to prepare Arab reports on successes and challenges and proposals for the continued implementation of the Millennium Development Goals to 2015.

(e) To request the Council of Arab Ministers of Environmental Affairs to accelerate the updating of the Sustainable Development Initiative for the Arab Region in order to speed up the incorporation of sustainable development principles into national and regional policies and programmes, and to call upon the Council to lose no time in holding the first Arab seminar on disaster risk reduction and in working towards implementation of the Arab regional plan in support of the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

(f) To request the Council of Arab Ministers of Water to continue its efforts to ensure that citizens have access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services, in accordance with Millennium Development Goal 7.

(g) To request the Council of Arab Ministers of Housing and Construction to continue its efforts to ensure that the living conditions of the inhabitants of poor areas and slums are considerably improved.

20. Arab projects in support of the steadfastness of Jerusalem

(a) To take note of the efforts that have been exerted by member States, the Councils of Ministers and the relevant Arab organizations to support the steadfastness of Jerusalem.

(b) To call upon member States to continue their endeavours to shore up Arab projects in support of the steadfastness of Jerusalem.

(c) To ensure that priority is given by the support fund for small and medium enterprises in the Arab world to projects that have been put forward by Palestine with a view to supporting the steadfastness of Jerusalem.

(d) To continue efforts to support Jerusalem and development projects in that city, with continuous coordination and cooperation between the League of Arab States, the Palestinian National Authority, the relevant Councils of Arab

Ministers and Arab organizations and Arab financial and economic institutions and funds.

III. Follow-up of implementation of the resolution concerning the Arab financial safety net for the State of Palestine that was adopted at the 2012 Baghdad Summit

To affirm the call for the Arab States to make a commitment to providing an Arab financial safety net for the State of Palestine worth an estimated $100 million per month, pursuant to the resolution that was adopted at the March 2012 Baghdad Summit, in order to support the Palestinian leadership in the face of financial pressures and Israel's continued failure to transfer monies owing to the State of Palestine. Thanks are due to Saudi Arabia for the initiative it has taken in providing support for the Arab financial safety net.

Resolutions of the third ordinary session of the 29th Summit, 22 January 2013.

Investment in Arab States: the Amended Unified Agreement for the Investment of Arab Capital in Arab States

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

Having considered:

- The General Secretariat memorandum;
- Economic and Social Council resolution 1925, adopted on 13 September 2012 at the ninetieth ordinary session, concerning investment in Arab States;
- Economic and Social Council resolution 1923, adopted on 13 September 2012 at the ninetieth ordinary session, establishing the agenda of the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, which was held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- Economic and Social Council resolution 1941, adopted at the special session of 6 December 2012, concerning the submission of the amended Unified Agreement for the Investment of Arab Capital in Arab States to the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- The amended Unified Agreement for the Investment of Arab Capital in Arab States;
- The draft resolutions put forward by the joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Economic and Social Council ministers that was held in preparation for the third session of the Development Summit;

– And in the light of discussions,

Decides:

1. To approve the amended Unified Agreement for the Investment of Arab Capital in Arab States (see annex);

2. To call upon Arab States to ratify the amended Agreement, so that it may be implemented with effect from early 2014;

3. To encourage the Arab private sector to exploit the advantages enshrined in the Agreement that aim to promote inter-Arab investment and guarantee flows of such investment.

(Resolution 30, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

The Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030)

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

Having considered:

- The General Secretariat memorandum;
- Economic and Social Council resolution 1923, adopted on 13 September 2012 at the ninetieth ordinary session, establishing the agenda of the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, that was held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- Economic and Social Council resolution 1942, adopted at the special session of 6 December 2012, concerning submission to the Summit of the final version of the Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030);
- Council of Arab Ministries of Electricity resolution 153, adopted on 22 December 2011 at the ninth session of the Council, concerning the inclusion in the Summit agenda of the Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030);
- The Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030);
- The draft resolutions put forward by the joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Economic and Social Council ministers that was held in preparation for the third session of the Development Summit;

– And in the light of discussions,

Decides:

1. To adopt the Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030) (see annex), as a framework for joint Arab action in the field of renewable energy, and to urge member States to take the Arab Strategy into consideration when formulating or developing their national strategies for the enhancement of renewable energy applications, with a view, inter alia, to creating an appropriate environment for investment in relevant projects;

2. To commission the Council of Arab Ministries of Electricity to formulate an operational programme of action for the implementation of the Strategy and submit a regular report to the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit on the progress achieved in that regard;

3. To request national, Arab, regional and international financing institutions and funds to provide the financial support required to implement renewable energy projects, thereby supporting development plans in the Arab region;

4. To call upon the private sector, in its capacity as a key partner in efforts to implement the national plans adopted by Arab States, to invest in and help promote the use of renewable energy technologies in Arab States.

(Resolution 31, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

The Millennium Development Goals 2000-2015 and beyond

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

Having considered:

- The General Secretariat memorandum;
- Resolution 564 of the twenty-third session of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level, concerning preparations for the Arab conference on achieving the Millennium Development Goals that was held in 2012;
- Resolution 22 of the second session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, on underpinning efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
- Resolution 1908 of the eighty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Council, concerning the economic and social issues before the twenty-third session of the Council of the League at summit level, held in Baghdad in 2012;
- Resolution 1942, adopted at the special session of the Economic and Social Council, concerning the third meeting of the ministerial committee on follow-up to and preparations for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- Resolution 660 of the thirty-first session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, on the convening of the Arab conference on achieving the Millennium Development Goals that was held in 2012;
- Resolution 689 of the thirty-second session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, concerning preparations for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- The recommendations of the Arab conference on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, held in 2012;
- The draft resolutions put forward by the joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Economic and Social Council ministers that was held in preparation for the third session of the Development Summit;

– Appreciating the efforts that have been exerted in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the achievements that have been realized;

– Reaffirming the commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015;

– Underlining the need to end the Israeli occupation of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and establish peace and stability, with a view to making progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

– Emphasizing that concern for youth unemployment, the creation of suitable job opportunities and disability issues is central to future internationally-agreed development goals;

– Commending the role played by the United Nations and its specialized agencies in cooperating with Member States with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals;

– And in the light of discussions,

Decides:

1. To adopt the recommendations of the Arab conference on achieving the Millennium Development Goals that was held in Cairo on 2 and 3 December 2012, which, in the version annexed hereto, were endorsed by the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs;

2. To request the General Secretariat to submit the Arab conference recommendations to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations that is to be held in 2015, with a view to ensuring that Arab views on achieving the Millennium Development Goals and on the post-2015 period are represented and taken into consideration in the expected global dialogue on sustainable development;

3. To commission the General Secretariat to liaise with member States, the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, specialized Arab councils and organizations, relevant United Nations agencies and all partners, with a view to taking steps to implement conference recommendations.

(Resolution 32, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Preventing Non-communicable Diseases

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

Having considered:

- The General Secretariat memorandum;
- Resolution 1908 of the eighty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Council, concerning the economic and social issues before the twenty-third session of the Council of the League at the summit level that was held in Baghdad in 2012;
- Resolution 1942 of the special session of the Economic and Social Council, concerning the third meeting of the ministerial committee on follow-up to and preparations for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;
- Resolution 9 of the thirty-seventh session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Health, concerning preparations for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, that was held in Riyadh in January 2013;
- Resolution 4 of the special session of the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Ministers of Health, concerning non-communicable diseases;

- The draft resolutions put forward by the joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Economic and Social Council ministers that was held in preparation for the third session of the Development Summit;

– Affirming its support for efforts to prevent non-communicable diseases;

– Affirming resolution 3 of the forty-fourth session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Communications, adopted on 15 January 2013, on mainstreaming and raising awareness of non-communicable disease prevention;

– Emphasizing its support for all national and Arab mechanisms to improve healthcare and prevent non-communicable diseases;

– And in the light of discussions,

Decides:

1. To welcome the Riyadh Declaration, annexed hereto, that was issued in Riyadh on 12 September 2012 by the International Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Non-communicable Diseases in the Arab World and Middle East, and invite member States to adopt that Declaration as a model for the prevention of non-communicable diseases;

2. To support efforts by the Council of Arab Ministers of Health to prevent non-communicable diseases and, in particular, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory disease, and to provide adequate human and material resources for the implementation of the relevant policies, plans and programmes;

3. To involve governmental, non-governmental and relevant academic and community institutions in national efforts to halt the spread of non-communicable diseases, by formulating and adopting national strategies to minimize factors that precipitate those diseases;

4. To commission the Council of Arab Ministers of Health to follow up implementation of the Declaration.

(Resolution 33, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Preparatory Meetings for the Third Session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit (Riyadh, January 2013)

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

Having considered:

- Economic and Social Council Resolution 1923, adopted on 13 September 2012 at the ninetieth ordinary session, establishing the agenda of the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh on 21 and 22 January 2013;

- Resolution 1942, adopted on 6 December 2012 at the special session of the Economic and Social Council, concerning submission to the Summit of a summary report on the work of the following forums:

– Arab Youth Forum on sustainable development; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Cairo from 6 to 8 January 2013;

– Forum of civil society organizations concerned with social development, relief operations and humanitarian assistance; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Cairo on 9 and 10 January 2013;

– Arab Private Sector Forum; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Riyadh on 12 and 13 January 2013;

And taking note of the outcomes of the aforementioned meetings,

Decides:

To welcome the outcomes of the following meetings:

1. Arab Youth Forum on sustainable development; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Cairo from 6 to 8 January 2013;

2. Forum of civil society organizations concerned with social development, relief operations and humanitarian assistance; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Cairo on 9 and 10 January 2013;

3. Arab Private Sector Forum; preparatory meeting for the Summit, held in Riyadh on 12 and 13 January 2013.

(Resolution 34, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Bahrain: host of the Joint Arab Stock Exchange Project

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

– Having heard the detailed and insightful statement made by His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, made at the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, that was held in Saudi Arabia on 21 January 2013;

– Recalling the recommendations of the Arab Private Sector Forum, which was convened in Riyadh on 12 and 13 January 2013 in preparation for the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit,

Decides:

To welcome the support extended by His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, to the private sector initiative to launch the Joint Arab Stock Exchange, and his decision to provide land for its headquarters in Bahrain.

(Resolution 35, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

The Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to Increase the Capital of Arab Financial Institutions and Joint Arab Companies

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

– Responding to the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to increase the capital of Arab financial institutions and joint Arab companies with a view to enhancing their contribution to economic and social development in our Arab countries;

– Expressing its deep appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for this noble initiative,

Decides:

To request boards of governors of Arab joint financial institutions and general assemblies of joint Arab companies to increase their capital by at least 50 per cent and complete the measures required to achieve that end.

(Resolution 36, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Expression of thanks and appreciation to Saudi Arabia for hosting the third session of the Council of the League at the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

– Expressing its appreciation to Saudi Arabia for graciously hosting the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, and for the considerable efforts it exerted in preparing for and organizing that session,

Decides:

1. To express its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the great efforts he exerted to provide the optimal environment in which to convene the Summit and ensure its success, and to His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, for his judicious chairmanship of Summit meetings and for ensuring that the Summit culminated in the adoption of key resolutions aimed at strengthening joint Arab action and achieving prosperity and development in Arab States, thus realizing the Arab peoples' aspirations for Arab economic integration;

2. To express its gratitude to the people and Government of Saudi Arabia for its warm reception, generous hospitality and judicious organization of Summit and preparatory meetings, and for providing all necessary resources for the success of the Summit under optimum conditions.

(Resolution 37, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Time and place of the fourth and fifth sessions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League,

– Recalling resolution 365 of the Riyadh Summit, adopted on 29 March 2007 at the nineteenth ordinary session, pursuant to a request by Kuwait and Egypt to convene an Arab summit for the consideration of social, economic and development issues;

– On the basis of the statement issued by the first session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League, held in Kuwait in 2009, to the effect that the meetings of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit would be regularly convened every two years;

– Pursuant to the note from Tunisia offering to host the fourth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in 2015 and the note from Lebanon offering to host the fifth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in 2017,

Decides:

1. To welcome Tunisia's offer to host the fourth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in 2015, and Lebanon's offer to host the fifth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in 2017;

2. To request the Secretary General to make the necessary arrangements with a view to establishing the dates on which the two sessions will be convened, and make the necessary preparations.

(Resolution 38, adopted at the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Statement on the recent terrorist attack in Algeria issued by the third session of the Arab Economic And Social Development Summit of the Council of the League

The Arab leaders who assembled in Riyadh on 22 January 2013 on the occasion of the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit of the Council of the League strongly condemned the terrorist act that had taken place in Algeria, in which Algerian and other nationals were held hostage in the Ayn Amenas region. They expressed their absolute solidarity with Algeria and their complete support for its efforts to combat all types of terrorism, whatever the pretext, in the belief that terrorism constitutes a criminal act that impedes social and economic development.

The Arab leaders also strongly condemned all forms of terrorism and underlined their rejection of extortion by terrorist groups, including by means of threats, kidnapping or killing hostages, or demands for the payment of ransom for use in financing their terrorist activities.

(Summit statement No. 3, issued by the third meeting of the third ordinary session, 22 January 2013)

Riyadh Declaration issued by the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

Riyadh, 21 and 22 January 2013

We, the heads of Arab States, having gathered together in Riyadh for the third session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit on 9 and 10 Rabi' I A.H. 1434 (21 and 22 January A.D. 2013), renewing our full commitment to implementing the resolutions adopted at the sessions of the Summit held in Kuwait on 19 and 20 January 2009 and in Sharm el-Sheikh on 19 January 2011,

Expressing our satisfaction at the measures taken to implement those resolutions and at the progress made in implementing the economic and social development projects decided at the first and second sessions, and emphasizing the need swiftly to complete implementation of the resolutions and remove any obstacles thereto,

Commending the executive measures that have been taken with a view to activating the account for the financing of small and medium projects in the Arab States, which was established pursuant to the first session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held in Kuwait in January 2009,

Recognizing the importance of further developing joint Arab action for the benefit of Arab citizens, improving living standards and providing comprehensive health care,

Have decided as follows:

Capacity-building of institutions for joint Arab action

We welcome the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz, to, first, increase the capital of joint Arab financial institutions by at least 50 per cent, in the light of their vital role in meeting growing development needs and with a view to enhancing their contribution to economic and social development in our Arab countries, refining their working methods, and facilitating their financing with a view to expansion and greater profitability and, second, increase the capital of joint Arab companies by at least 50 per cent with a view to developing their capacity to put in place new joint Arab productive projects and contribute to Arab public-private projects that would meet Arab citizens' growing needs for commodities and services, bridge the divide that affects our countries in respect of many such commodities and services, and boost employment opportunities for Arab citizens.

Promotion of intra-Arab investment

We recognize the important role of investment in enhancing Arab economic integration, fostering intra-Arab trade, developing new opportunities to reduce unemployment and increase employment, reducing poverty, investing Arab capital in Arab States, leveraging that capital for development, strengthening our Arab economies and promoting intra-Arab investment flows. We have therefore adopted the amended Unified Agreement for the Investment of Arab Capital in Arab States with a view to keeping pace with Arab, regional and international developments, creating an enabling environment for inter-Arab investment flows and making the Arab region attractive for investment. We affirm our commitment to work towards implementing the Agreement. We call upon the Arab private sector, including Arab emigrant entrepreneurs, to take advantage of the opportunities and guarantees offered by the Agreement and contribute to integrated Arab economic development.

We reaffirm our commitment to create an investment-friendly environment in our countries and adopt national legislation aimed at attracting investment and exploiting our countries' natural resources and comparative advantages.

Development of Energy Applications

Mindful of the need to keep pace with global developments in the applications of energy resources, we have adopted the Arab Strategy for the Development of Renewable Energy Applications (2010-2030) with a view to meeting the growing demand for energy, varying its sources, complying with the needs of sustainable development and allowing the establishment of an Arab renewable energy market, which would create new job opportunities with the effective participation of the Arab private sector. We support Arab projects aimed at developing the applications of renewable energy technologies in all their aspects by creating the necessary legislative, institutional and regulatory environment.

Realization of the Millennium Development Goals

We affirm our commitment to realize the Millennium Development Goals and work to support the efforts of Arab Least-Developed Countries towards that end, with a particular focus on Goal 1, target 3, concerning the eradication of hunger, including rapid intervention to confront the current food security crises. We have therefore adopted the recommendations of the Arab Conference on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals in order to ensure the necessary Arab mobilization until 2015 and develop an Arab perspective that would contribute to the formulation of the global vision for the new sustainable development goals beyond 2015. In particular, the Arab goals to be agreed should include two pivotal objectives: first, to support efforts to promote individual and collective well-being in an equitable and sustainable manner, and second, to create decent work opportunities and place greater emphasis on unemployment among younger persons and persons with special needs.

We support the efforts of the relevant Arab agencies, including the competent Arab ministerial councils, to realize the Millennium Development Goals in cooperation with all regional and international partners and the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

Improvement of health services and disease control

We recall our commitment to improve health care, placing greater emphasis on non-communicable diseases, which are a significant challenge to social well-being and development efforts in our Arab countries; expedite the formulation and consolidation of policies, strategies, programmes and plans of action in respect of the social determinants of health; involve all social forces in such efforts; foster international cooperation to tackle those determinants, a task that is a core part of the realization of the Millennium Development Goals; comply with the commitments made with regard to maternal and child health and the eradication of communicable and non-communicable diseases. Further to the efforts made thus far to combat and eliminate such diseases, and pursuant to the outcomes of the first session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, that was held in Kuwait in January 2009, we therefore welcome the Riyadh Declaration issued by the International Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Non-Communicable Diseases in the Arab World and the Middle East, that was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 9 to 12 December 2012.

Intra-Arab trade and the Arab Customs Union

We reaffirm our dedication to supporting Arab economic integration, increasing the volume of intra-Arab trade and forming a solid Arab economic bloc. We therefore affirm our determination to complete the requirements for GAFTA by the end of 2013, making every effort to overcome the obstacles to that objective. We appreciate the efforts to promote intra-Arab trade that are exerted by the competent Arab organizations, specialized bodies and regional and international entities. We express our support for the decisions taken by the fourth extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit Conference, that was held in Mecca in 2012, calling for an increase in the capital of the Islamic Development Bank in order to promote the development of trade and mutual investment and directing the Bank to support the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development. We welcome and stress the importance of supporting the initiative of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation to foster trade in Arab countries.

We commend the steps taken thus far to build the Arab Customs Union and affirm our commitment to endeavour to complete the remaining requirements to establish the Union within the agreed time frame, towards full implementation in 2015.

The Arab private sector and its role in joint Arab action

We recognize that the Arab private sector is a vital partner in fostering the Arab development process, increasing economic activity and stimulating production. We will continue to support the private sector by providing it with an enabling environment, encouraging joint productive investment projects, eliminating obstacles to intra-Arab investment flows, facilitating the travel of entrepreneurs and investors, and taking other actions enabling the private sector to fulfil the desired role. The Arab private sector should fulfil its responsibility to support joint Arab action and increase its economic and social role in that regard.

We welcome the outcomes of the Arab Private Sector Forum that was held in Riyadh in connection with this session of the Summit, in addition to the efforts made to consolidate networks of Arab entrepreneurs and investors and implement joint Arab projects for the benefit of the Arab peoples.

Arab food security

We affirm our determination to ensure food security in our Arab region. We have therefore directed the concerned entities and organizations to take swift action to implement the Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security in coordination with the recipient Arab States. Arab, regional and international financial institutions, and the Arab private sector, which we invite to invest in the projects of the Emergency Programme.

Arab water cooperation

We are mindful of the paramount importance to the Arab region of water security, which is a component of Arab national security. We recognize the reality of the scarcity of water from which our region suffers. We will therefore monitor closely the implementation of the Strategy for Water Security in the Arab Region and the project for the integrated management of water resources, in order to address and meet future water resource needs and challenges and achieve sustainable development.

The environment and sustainable development

In view of the importance and global salience of environmental protection, we affirm our commitment to prioritize the environment through the following measures:

(a) Accelerating the updating of the Sustainable Development Initiative for the Arab Region and its implementing plan in the light of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference) and of the eighteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Doha;

(b) Following up implementation of the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and accelerating its incorporation into development plans;

(c) Urging regional States that have nuclear power stations to disclose their safety standards and inviting them to accede to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in order to prevent the environmental damage that would arise from any serious accidents;

(d) Taking measures on the basis of UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol thereto aimed at mitigating climate change, the effect of which on the Arab region has been particularly severe;

(e) Protecting natural resources and accelerating the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Education and Scientific Research

We will continue working to improve and develop education; provide it as a human right; garner support for the plan to develop education in the Arab world; promote and increase funding for scientific research; encourage support for Arab researchers and innovators in the sciences and technology; and promote information and communication technology, which is a means towards integrated development and an inclusive education system.

Youth

Through multi-dimensional policies and strategies, and within a unified and integrated vision including youth as stakeholders as well as recipients, we will empower youth to contribute to sustainable development efforts, build their capacities, ensure a supportive environment for quality education, provide advanced information and training and comprehensive health care. We therefore welcome the outcomes of the third Arab Youth Forum and call for the convening of an Arab Youth Forum in Saudi Arabia within the next six months in order to discuss current youth priorities and address the fundamental questions affecting the future and aspirations of Arab youth. The core focus of that Forum should be the search for mechanisms to create opportunities for youth employment, promote decent work, combat unemployment and allow their political, economic and social participation.

Women

We recognize the important role of women in development. We affirm our determination to continue our efforts to develop regulations and laws enabling women to build their capacities and skills, promoting female literacy and allowing women to capitalize on their skills by providing equal opportunities for greater social, economic and political participation.

Civil society

We are mindful of the important role of civil society organizations and institutions as stakeholders in development, economic and social processes, a role that we have reaffirmed at previous sessions of the Summit. We are satisfied that the forum of civil society organizations in preparation for the Development Summit has consolidated effective partnership between Governments and civil society organizations in pursuit of social development.

Conclusion

We, the leaders of the Arab States, having gathered together in Riyadh, decide to convene the fourth Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in two years' time, in early 2015. Further to the kind invitation of the Government of Tunisia, that

Summit will be held in Tunisia. It will follow up implementation of the decisions and provisions set out in this Declaration. The Economic and Social Council and General Secretariat of the League of Arab States shall follow up the issue and report periodically to successive Arab Summits on the progress achieved. The fifth session of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit shall be held in Lebanon in 2017.

We express our thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud for hosting the proceedings of the Summit. We commend His Majesty Crown Prince Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, for his excellent stewardship of the meetings, which culminated in significant resolutions that strengthen the process of joint Arab action, advance the well-being and development of our States and help to realize the Arab economic integration to which our peoples aspire.

We are grateful to the League of Arab States and its agencies for making the preparations for the Summit and enabling its success.